



MEDIA RELEASE

FUNDRAISER FOR ARTIST AND TEACHER MANUEL UNZUETA THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 5-8PM, EL PASEO RESTAURANT

SANTA BARBARA, CA – April 15, 2013

A fundraiser for local artist and professor Manuel Unzueta who lost his entire life's art collection in a fire last month will be held at El Paseo Restaurant this Thursday, April 18, from 5-8pm. The event is sponsored by EOPS at SBCC, the PARC Foundation, the Santa Barbara County Arts Commission and the Santa Barbara US/Mexico Sister Cities Committee. The suggested donation of \$15 includes appetizers, live music and no host bar. All proceeds from this event will go to the Milagro Fire Fund Trust set up through Santa Barbara City College at SBBT/Union Bank to assist Manuel during this time of recovery.

Manuel and his family lost irreplaceable items related to his life's work as an artist, professor, counselor and father. The fire destroyed a collection of over 1000 pieces of valuable paintings inside his home studio which was also home to 50 years of drawings, hundreds of honors and awards, historic photographs, academic lectures, a vintage vinyl record collection, musical instruments, small animals and reptiles. Unzueta has produced some of the most powerful statements and images found in Chicano Art since its inception during the height of the Chicano Movement. Manuel's ability to define and recognize the historic and cultural relevancy of the Mexican American experience through his paintings and murals has made him a local treasure. Manuel is an internationally recognized artist with work displayed in Mexico City, the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC and other cities throughout North America.

Manuel's exemplary commitment to education and community service has been a beacon of hope and inspiration for thousands of students through his lectures in the City's public schools, at Santa Barbara City College and UCSB. The countless volunteer hours he has given to support community public art projects have added a distinct cultural flavor to our neighborhoods. Equally important, Manuel assisted and advised thousands of students as an EOPS counselor at SBCC. It was in this capacity that Manuel offered a safe haven for students challenged by higher education. Manuel has been an excellent mentor and has offered a different level of leadership for young people through his unique artistic perspective.

Currently, Manuel is assisting the City of Santa Barbara's Youth Arts Alliance Program. Brand new neighborhood murals at Bohnett Park and the Eastside Library are proof of how Manuel uses his talent and experience to inspire today's youth. He also sits on the La Cumber Junior High Foundation that seeks to improve the health and wellness of children and families living on Santa Barbara's greater Westside.

Lastly, Manuel's impact and contribution to the community of Santa Barbara has helped shaped our city's cultural landscape through his art and teachings. Thursday evening's fundriaser will help give Manuel the strength and inspiration to continue his lifelong work and commitment to the community of Santa Barbara.

For more information, contact Mark Alvarado, Neighborhood and Outreach Services Senior Supervisor, City of Santa Barbara Parks and Recreation Department at mmalvarado@SantaBarbaraCA.gov or 805-897-2560.

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